

Application No. 09/400,833
Response dated October 26, 2004
Reply to Office Action of August 4, 2004

REMARKS

Claims 2, 3, 19, and 20 are pending in this application. No amendment has been made in this Response.

(1) Claims 2, 3, 19, and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Akimoto et al.

The Office Action asserts that the arm 35 corresponds to the traveling body of the present invention, which moves above the production housing section and the material housing section by the path 7 and the driving block 34.

Contrary to the Examiner's statement, the arm 35 of Akimoto et al. does not correspond to the traveling body of the present invention. The driving block 34 of Akimoto extends the arm 35 in the X (or A) direction as shown in Figs. 1 and 5. However, the movement of extending the arm 35 is only limited at the time when the robot 35 is stayed in front of the exit of the carriers 2, 3 or the processing units 20. The arm 35 of Akimoto et al. cannot move **simultaneously** in the X and Y directions, because the arm 35 must be not-extended when the robot 30 moves along the transfer path 31 or in the Y direction. If not, the robot 30 cannot move along the transfer path 31 because the extended the arm 35 collides with the side walls of the carriers 2, 3 and the processing units 20. As shown in Figs. 1 and 7-9, the carriers 2, 3 have side walls. In the device of Akimoto et al., the

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robot 30 is first moved along the transfer path 31, and after stopping the movement, the arm 35 is then extended in order to load or unload the wafers on or from the carriers 2, 3 (col. 4, lines 6-9). The processing units 20 also have side walls as shown in Fig. 1, 2 and 7-9. The description for the movement is consistent with the non-simultaneous manner. See col. 4, lines 38-53. Nothing provided in the robot 30 of Akimoto et al. can move simultaneously in the X (or A) and Y directions.

On the other hand, the traveling body of the present invention can move simultaneously in the first and the second directions, as recited in claim 20. The rejection of claim 20 under 35USC§102(b) is not supported by Akimoto et al. Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

(2) In view of the above, claims 2, 3, 19, and 20, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

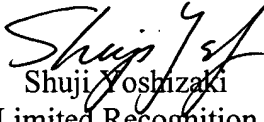
If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

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In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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